



The NSW Government is delivering major improvements to maritime infrastructure and facilities statewide, to help the boating and wider community safely access, use, and navigate our inland and coastal waters. As part of that work, we are undertaking essential repair work to the Port Macquarie Southern Breakwall.

The last maintenance work on the Port Macquarie Southern Breakwall was completed nine years ago. Early investigations in 2022 for this project (including underwater assessments and scans) revealed that the effectiveness and structure of the wall have been compromised over time and are now in need of repair work.

While in the early stages of this project, Transport released the proposal for community consultation, and received a number of responses. The biggest issue that emerged from the feedback was regarding the trees along the Breakwall and their possible removal.




-29

Trees being removed



+43

Replacement trees



+6000

Native grasses to be added

Why are the trees being removed?

When we presented our project plan to the community for feedback, we received a large volume of feedback regarding the trees along the Breakwall. As a result of this feedback, Transport undertook an additional independent Tree Impact Assessment. It investigated and calculated the Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) and Structural Root Zones (SRZs) in accordance with the Australian Standards for Protection of trees on

development sites. With the results of this assessment in mind, Transport will be moving forward with removing these 29 trees for the following reasons:

- Several options to retain the trees were explored as part of early development of the proposal. The options included retaining walls, relocation, replacement planting and reducing the proposed width of the path. Replacement planting has been assessed and determined as the best solution.
- The construction method needed for the repair of the breakwall will affect the tree protection zone (roots) and will impact the health of the trees and their long-term survivability. None of the above mitigations to retain the trees would be feasible or would guarantee the health of the trees.
- The existing trees have root systems that now extend into the batter and footpath sections of the breakwall structure. The proposed essential maintenance work will damage the trees' root systems. Arborist advice is that the works will impact the health of the trees and their long-term survival.

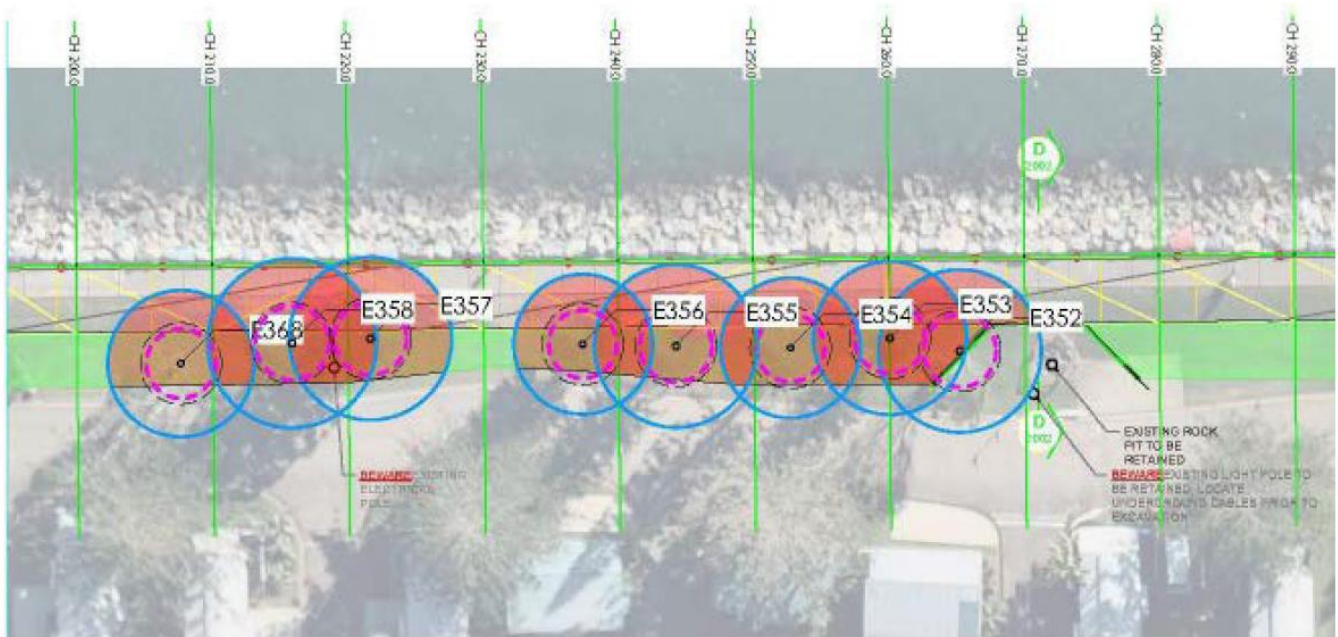


Figure 1: Image depicting the Tree Protection Zone (the blue circle), the Structural Root Zones (the pink dotted circle) and the impacted areas (red shading) found in the Tree Impact Assessment.

As an additional measure, Transport will have an arborist on site each day to individually assess every tree before it is removed and ensure that we remove only those essential to the repair work.

What is Transport doing to replace the trees?

Transport acknowledges the importance of Norfolk Island Pines to the identity of Port Macquarie and the community's desire to retain the trees that have been planted in the southern breakwall crest batter.

On reflection of the above factors, replacement planting was considered to be the best option and provides the opportunity to place new trees in a better location to ensure they are enjoyed for many more years to come, while also allowing the shared user path to be widened to five metres as per the Port Macquarie Hastings Council request.

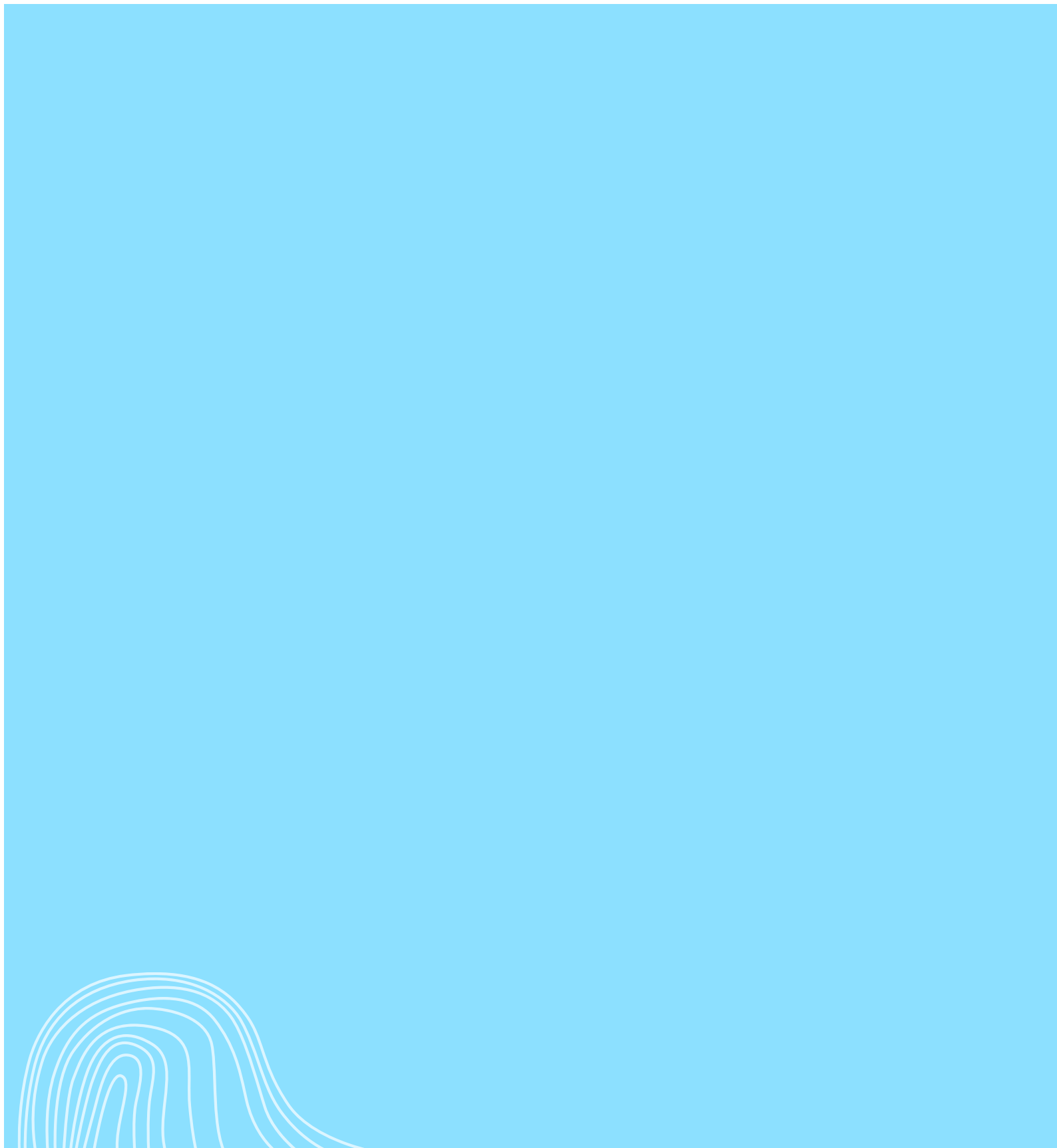
Our initial proposal was to replant with a mix of Cook and Norfolk Island Pines. We received a significant volume of feedback from the community opposing the Cook Pines, so we will now be using only Norfolk Island Pines as the replacement trees. We will plant the Norfolk Island Pines close to the new shared user path, which in time will provide shade similar to what currently exists.

As a result of the feedback on the importance of fauna and the habitats the fauna provides, Transport also increased the number of replacement trees from 29 to 43, with 6000 native ground covers and grasses to be installed along the batter.

The updated Landscape Plan will soon be available to view online. This plan will add more habitat value and

encourage more animals and bird life into the area.

Transport's goal is to achieve a "no net loss" of biodiversity as a consequence of infrastructure development activities. For this proposal, Transport will offset the permanent loss of 29 amenity trees by providing 43 replacement trees and by contributing to the Transport for NSW Conservation Fund. This is used to fund conservation management specifically for biodiversity projects. This is a mitigation measure that also recognises the carbon offset and climate change impacts of removing these trees.



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